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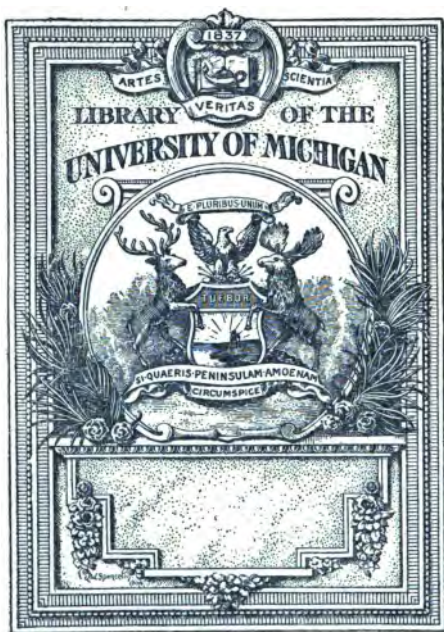
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A

**THE LEGEND
OF
SAINT FRIDESWIDE**

THE LEGEND
OF
SAINT FRIDESWIDE

AND OTHER POEMS

BY
FLORENCE HAYLLAR

WESTMINSTER
ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE LEGEND OF SAINT FRIDESWIDE . . .	I
AMOR DEI, PERPETUA JUVENTUS . . .	37
MORALITIES	38
ON READING DORA GREENWELL'S POEMS .	39
TWO WOMEN	40
THE CANDLE	41
A FEBRUARY DAY	41
THE TIDE	42
MAGNA EST PATIENTIA	43
THE GULF-STREAM	45
NATURA CONSOLATRIX	46
DURA HIEMPS	47
THISTLEDOWN	49
A SONG OF FAIRY-LOVE	51
MOORLAND HILLS	54
A STAR-SONG	55
PARNASSIA PALUSTRIS	56
LONELINESS	58
MENTEM MORTALIA TANGUNT	60
PEGASUS SIGNIFIETH THE VAIN DREAMS OF	
A YOUNG MAN	63
THE WITCH	64
EARTHEN POTS	66
HOME FROM BATTLE	68
FRANZ HERMANN MÜLLER	70

THE LEGEND OF SAINT FRIDESWIDE

TOLD BY ONE OF HER NUNS

I. *How SAINT FRIDESWIDE founded her* NUNNERY.

THE stream of the Thames is swift and sheen;
The vale of the Thames is broad and green:
A long summer's day a man may roam
Through the fields that were Frideswide's home.
Where the oxen come to the lapping ford
By the city with grain and armour stored,
'Neath the English sky and its rainswept blue,
Steadfast and fair Maid Frideswide grew.
Rich and high was her father's hall,
Thronged with noble and priest and thrall;
And deep with sweet blossom his meadows
smiled,
The land's glad dower for his only child.
Ah! but she turns her from these away—
High heart and tender—to muse and pray!
Robes of scarlet or linen white,

I

B

THE LEGEND OF

Little in these would she delight;—
Lover pleading, or lover brave,
King nor warrior would she have;
Husband nor lordship seeks she none;—
The dear Lord Christ she loves alone.

What though sternly her father sighs,
And the thick tears gather in Sefrid's eyes;
Shall they not learn, as the days increase,
The splendour and might of her heavenly peace?
Shall she not yet, to her own heart true,
Show them the work she is called to do?
See, where the souls, for whom Christ bled,
Lie low, and dark, and uncomforted!
See, where the children, little and weak,
Love, and nurture, and learning seek!
Hear how the dying, with groans of pain,
Summon her back to their side again!
And what is the whole world's pride and ease,
When the Lord Christ calls her to care for these?

Dear as the sacred hearth-fire's glow
Is father's and mother's love below.
As the hearth-fire's glow in the noon sunshine,
Must it pale in the light of the Love Divine.
And they yield their wills to that heavenly
strength,
To give her her heart's desire at length—
And there rises, beside the wandering stream,

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

The holy house of the maiden's dream,
Where children gather about her knees,
And we twelve, in sweet services,
Follow the path her love has shown,
And live for the dear Lord Christ alone.

II. *How KING ALFGAR pursued after SAINT FRIDESWIDE and how the LORD CHRIST punished him.*

How sweet the rest in cloistered walls—
The prayer and praise how sweet,
Which, as the glad day mounts or falls,
Our loving hearts repeat!

And when so brave a soul and meek
Sheds glory on the day,
How above all things must we seek
Close at her side to stay!

But who is he, whose bands alight,
And throng our lowly gate?
With champing steed, and sword-edge bright,
Our pathways who beset?

What mean these gifts of gauds and gold—
These robes of rich array?

THE LEGEND OF

These men-at-arms, so glittering bold,
What message shall they say?

From Alfgar of the heathen heart,
And from his heathen home,
With the gifts of a king, and the threats of a king,
A-wooing 'tis they come.

The king hath seen Maid Frideswide's face—
O brows with morning crowned!—
The king hath trembled at the grace
Which flows her steps around.

And all day long his eyes would feast
Upon that glorious mien—
And all life long, in joy and rest,
His soul on hers would lean:—

To bid the cloister-walls dispart,
And yield her as his bride—
For Frideswide's face, and Frideswide's heart,
These men-at-arms must ride.

“I pray him, for his Queen and wife,
Choose one more digne and fair;
And leave me to the cloistered life
Of love and work and prayer.

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

"Your words are faint; yourselves I see
Dim-drawn in shrouding mist—
So mightily possesseth me
The heavenly love of Christ!

"Nay, then,—how should I plight him troth?
Or think to share his throne?
How should my bridal vows be sooth,
Who love but Christ alone?"

Now may the love in which we boast
Come down our aid to be!—
Awake, awake, O heavenly host,
And succour hastily!

For see, their fierce wrath flareth high,
Burning in vengeful scorn!—
And may Christ pardon in the sky,
The oath that these have sworn!

Ah, Frideswide!—see their rageful looks,
Their lips, and thrusting hands!
—But still and mild, 'mid the tumult wild,
In the Lord Christ's love, she stands.

Unto the dear Lord Christ she prays;
Her King in heaven she calls:

THE LEGEND OF

And lo!—What sudden, dark amaze
Is this, that on them falls?

Each clasps his head; each bends his knee;
And loud in terror cries—
For she hath prayed to Christ, and He
Hath blinded all their eyes.

“ Ah, Holy maid!—To God most dear!—
Have mercy and forgive!
Ah! pray once more—thy God shall hear—
That we may see, and live!”

Then, full of ruth, and full of love,
Prayeth she yet again;
And the Lord Christ answereth above,
And healeth all those men.

Once more they see the blessed sky;
Their pangs of blindness cease;—
Maid Frideswide looketh tranquilly,
With eyes of steadfast peace—

Maid Frideswide looketh tranquilly,
For peaceful is her heart;—
With tears and shame, so proud who came,
Those men-at-arms depart!

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

But now,—what refuge from his ire,
The dread king's ire and pride?
For, filled with rage and hot desire,
Himself shall hither ride!

O Frideswide now, with hurrying feet,
Pass through the convent door!—
Oh, leave behind His altar sweet,
The children and the poor!

Haste where the river reaches gleam,
And loose a boat to flee—
Push off—and down the midnight stream
We two will go with thee!

Adown the kindly stream we float
Lifting our hearts to pray;
And one there is who guides our boat
Most softly on her way.

Oh, glorious is his vesture white—
Starlike his brows, and mild!
How safe we journey through the night,
With this celestial child!

E'en till the dawn he rows us on;
And in the red sunrise,

THE LEGEND OF

Hard by the towers of Abingdon,
He passes from our eyes.

Here shall she pause, and here shall find
Rest, and a welcome sweet.

—Not yet! Not yet!—for hark, behind,
The fall of marching feet!

The spears and shields of Alfgar's men
Flash in the morning sun,
As swift they take across the plain
The road to Abingdon.

Now shall the greenwood's misty shade
Her panting flight enfold,
And from the chase shall hide her head
In marsh-wreaths wan and cold:

Now shall the bramble's tangled screen
Across her pathway bend;
And stout oak-trees shall stand between,
Maid Frideswide to defend.

But all forespent are breath and limb,
Albeit of dauntless cheer—
The eyes for weariness are dim,
That ne'er grew dim with fear.

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

Here hath the beast her secret lair,
And hath the bird his nest:
Where shall we find a place for her,
That she may breathe and rest?

A low-browed hut, where the oak-trees part
And gnarled ivies twine:
And Frideswide, with her thankful heart,
Lies down among the swine.

Better among the rootling swine,
In forest drear and lone,
O Alfgar, than be bride of thine
To share a godless throne!

But short the day of prayer most sweet,
And short the rest and praise,—
For hark!—the noise of running feet
Along the forest-ways!

With glittering eyes, and panting breath,
And looks of sore affright—
Like messengers of pallid death—
They burst upon our sight;

The trembling folk of Oxford town,
Hither with speed they hie;

THE LEGEND OF

And at her knees they cast them down,
And bitterly they cry:

“Ah, Frideswide!—for the king hath sworn,
Out of his heart of sin,
To sack the town to-morrow morn;
And now he rideth in!

“Shall Oxford city fair and high
In ashes foul be laid?—
And must our wives and children die,
That thou mayest live a maid?

“Come back! Come back! and stay his hand!
What!—Is thy heart a stone?
Hast thou no pity on thy land,
To let this deed be done?”

Lo, in her face, the Lord's dear grace,
The peace, the power, are fled!
A maiden lorn, in evil case,
She weeps, and bows her head.

“And must I leave the heavenly life,
And suffer earthly stain?
And must I be King Alfgar's wife,
Or foully these be slain?

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

“Oh, Catherine! Catherine, high in heaven!—
Look from thy place and see!
By that wheel whereon thy body was riven—
Ah, pray Him for me!

“Hear—’mid the pipes and psalteries sweet—
Cicely!—hear me cry!
Of His pity the dear Lord Christ entreat
To save, or let me die!”

Methought a voice of echoing prayer
Was in the tree-tops made—
Methought a soul was in the air,
And all the forest prayed:—

And sudden, there shoots across the hills
A glory not of earth;
And a voice adown the blue air thrills—
A voice of heavenly mirth.

“To Oxford, by the Northern gate,
See ye King Alfgar ride?—
See ye his horse, and helm of state—
And blank sword at his side?

“To Oxford, by the Northern gate,
He rides, ’mid wail and din—

THE LEGEND OF

And in his eyes are rage and hate;
And at his heart is sin.

"Ye men of Oxford city fair,
Why make ye such ado?
What though in pride the road he ride,
Your gate he'll not pass through—

"For lo! as he halts him on his road,
Where tall the gate-towers rise,—
The red bolt of the wrath of God
Strikes on his sinful eyes!—

"The red bolt of Christ's flaming wrath
Strikes out the eyeballs' sight—
Hurls the king headlong on his path,
Crying in grievous night.

"Crying he casts his hands abroad
And grippeth at the dust,—
Who recked not of the wrath of God,
But lived for earthly lust.

"Hail, Frideswide, hail!—thy Lord most dear,
He biddeth thee rejoice!
Hail, Frideswide, hail!"

And sure, more near
Cometh the wondrous voice!

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

And, in a flash, 'twixt hushing boughs,
Above the bracken green,
Maid Catherine with the heaven-lit brows
And Cicely are seen.

Are seen!—are gone!—

Fro' the forest hoar

That light doth fail and cease;
But in Maid Frideswide's face once more
Shines forth the Lord Christ's peace.

III. *How SAINT FRIDESWIDE by her prayers healed the KING ALFGAR of his blindness.*

I, who tell it, I saw it befall;
How the Lord Christ healed him, I saw it all.

Vespers were sung; and the priest was gone;
And we knelt in the church at Abingdon.

The westering light through the arches shone,
And cast red gold on the swart grey stone.

Frideswide prayed by the chancel rail,
Hiding her eyes with her fingers pale.

Lowly the king lay, afar, by the door,
His body pressed to the cold, stone floor.

THE LEGEND OF

All we knelt praying in wonder and fear—
For the very power of Christ was near.

On a sudden she rose, in that sunset-flame;
“Alfgar!” she called; and the blind king came;

Stretched out his hands for her presence sweet;
Bowed him, bowed him,—and fell at her feet.

“O king, my brother! by this my word
Speaks to thee Christ, the merciful Lord.

“Raise toward yon cross, o’er the altar high,
Thine eyeballs, blinded full piteously—

“Look forth, where He hangs on the deathful
tree—
Look forth—and believe in thine heart—and
see!”

Then laid the king his hands in her hands,
As one who would follow his lord’s commands;

Lift up his eyes to that rood of pain;
And the dear Lord gave him to see again.

Rang to the roof the king’s loud cry:
“Have me, and hold me; for Thine am I!”

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

Rang through our hearts his cry, I wist—
Giving himself to the love of Christ.

But Frideswide stood, and spake never a word,
For her spirit was rapt with Christ the Lord.

Then he cast him down, in awe and in bliss,
The falling hem of her robe to kiss;

And there he besought her, bending low:
“Ah! bless me and pardon before I go!”

Then lifted she up her hands, and laid
Those holy hands upon the king's head,

And she spake to him:—but I may not tell
What words they were from her lips that fell,

For they seemed not words to mankind given,
But an angel's speech from the heights of heaven.

IV. *How SAINT FRIDESWIDE withdrew herself to BINSEY.*

HERE are the lonely marshes,
Gleaming and broad outspread!
Lush and rank the grass is;

THE LEGEND OF

Fearless the wildfowl passes,
Winging her way o'erhead.

To Oxford the boats go down—
Sail and oar they ply;
But they turn not their sharp bows hither:
In foul or in fairest weather,
Lonely the marshlands lie.

Here bloom the wild marsh-flowers,
Orchis and marigold;
But no children come to pull them,
Where the still marsh-waters lull them,
About their rootlets cold.

Here the heron breeds and the bittern,
And the darting dragon-flies play;
Here are no byres nor meadows—
And here men cast no shadows
To fright wild things away.

Rejoice, O lonely marshes,
Under the wooded hill!
Maid Frideswide cometh, bringing
God's love, and sweet singing,
Your desolate waste to fill!

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

An islet in the marshes—
A little osier cell—
In the spring, white thorn-trees blowing—
In winter, grey frost, and snowing:—
Here shall Maid Frideswide dwell.

To Margaret the maiden
Maid Frideswide builds her house—
A chapel plain and lowly,
To Margaret, maiden holy,
Under the thorn-tree boughs.

And whence shall we draw water
'Mid the marsh-pools drear and fell?
—Her prayer Maid Frideswide maketh;
And beneath the thorn-trees breaketh
A sweet and springing well.

It is Saint Margaret's well,
Whither folk come to pray—
With their gifts and sorrows kneeling,
For comfort and for healing;
And it shall spring alway.

O Frideswide, make us answer,—
For why wilt thou dwell here?
Thy little children leaving,

THE LEGEND OF

Who seek for thee with grieving,
With piteous cry and tear?

In thy fair Oxford house
Are learning and prayer and toil;
In the streets of Oxford city
The poor man craves thy pity,
The rich man seeks thy smile.

Great and dear thy name is,
Far beyond the high town-wall;—
Thee hath the Lord Christ given
To draw men's souls to heaven—
And wilt thou leave them all?

SAINT FRIDESWIDE *maketh answer:*

He, who the Lord Christ follows,
From passion and trouble must cease;
Great and true must his love be,
Deep and true be his peace.
He, who would draw his brother
To the Lord Christ and His rest,—
Unbroken must be the quiet
He cherisheth in his breast.
Valour in truth he needs,
Who would bear what the Lord Christ bore,—

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

Constancy needs he and valour,
But calm he needs yet more.
Out, from the thronging city—
Out, from the anguish and praise—
'Tis the Lord Christ draws me hither,
To these marshes, and lone days.
If I give, it is but His giving,
Who wondrously doth impart,
In this desert, in this silence,
His very self to my heart.
My soul is nought but dead embers;
By this breath He bids them burn:
I come to Him troubled, empty;
But filled shall I return.
Dear my children, have patience,
And suffer His wise will!
For your sakes it is, and your service,
He holds me here dumb and still.
Of Himself and His great treasure
Full soon I bring you increase:
Mightier yet shall the love be,
Mightier yet the peace!

V. *How SAINT FRIDESWIDE kissed the LEPER.*

OH, sweet and blest are homeward ways,
In gladsome morning air,

THE LEGEND OF

Now as, with throbbing hearts of praise
And hymns of joy, we fare.

And with us forth went many a man
And woman full of ease;
And many little children ran
Laughing around her knees.

For in their midst did Frideswide go,—
And from her eyes there shone
A love more pure than shrine-lamp's glow,
More glorious than the sun.

—For in thy face is shadowed thus
The Heart by all adored;
And, through thy voice, there speaks to us
The dear voice of the Lord!

As forthright now our way we went
By wood and farm and hill—
Where winds the swaying cornblades bent,
And reeds stood in the rill—

Where song-birds glanced, through leafy bowers,
Above the dusk-hued swine,
And moved amid the meadow flowers
Fair heads of grazing kine—

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

As that good land we crossed, and sang
Loud hymns of thankful cheer,
From pale-struck children's throats there rang
The sudden shriek of fear!—

And startled men, from cruel eyes,
Looked loathing and fierce pride—
And women hushed their children's cries,
And sobbing turned aside.

Then, where they shrinking made him way,
A man crept, halt and slow,—
A leper, 'neath that blue noon-day,
In his exceeding woe.

Nor right, nor left he looked, in care
Whoso might scorn him then;—
For whom God strikes, he well may spare
To heed the blows of men.

But, steadfast in dire need, he strove
Frideswide alone to gain;
—Ah! in her face, the unchanging love
Is darkly steeped with pain!

And now before her where he stood,
He bent no suppliant knee,—

THE LEGEND OF

But of a noble hardihood
And faith unspent was he.

His face towards her face was strong—
So pain bestoweth worth!—
And hoarsely, o'er his stricken tongue,
The difficult words came forth:

“O Frideswide Maid! do thou fulfil
On me God's benison!
Kiss me!—for love of His heavenly will,
And the Lord Christ His son!”

As a friend, who sees the face of his friend,
So bright her eyes do shine:
O'er that pallid head, and form of dread,
She maketh the holy sign—

And all as an eager mother springs
To aid her babe distress,
Her hand to his hand straitly clings,
Her lips to his lips are pressed.

There stand we by, with marvelling mind,
Awestruck in pity and tears;
When, lo! all changed in wondrous kind
The leper's form appears.

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

Ah, Christ!—for healed is each ghastly wound—
Cleansed is that face defiled!
And see!—the flesh of his body is found
As the flesh of a little child!

O Heart of Christ!—Trembling and dumb
Before Thy love we fall!—
Of Thy high grace we pray Thee come
Even so, and heal us all!

Now in sweet silence journey we,
With penitent hearts of prayer;
Our eyes, fast held, no longer see
The land by which we fare;

But Frideswide smiles in glad heart's ease
'Neath the broad light of the sun,—
And closer yet about her knees
The little children run.

VI. *How SAINT FRIDESWIDE departed to be with the LORD CHRIST.*

ON the autumn woodlands warm is the sun,
And bright 'twixt his banks the Thames doth
run.

THE LEGEND OF

With mighty shoulders the rivermen pull,
For the current is swift, and the stream is full.
To the rippling ford the high wains come,
From township and cornland journeying home;
The proud team strains, as the waggoner calls,
Drawing the load to Oxford walls.
The husbandman bows his back to his toil,
Spending his sweat on the jealous soil,—
The goodwife busily rules her house,
With careful eyes, 'neath her furrowed brows —
The maidens spin as she bids them do;—
And the world's labour spins the whole day
through—

By field and city, by wood and ford,
Steadily working the will of the Lord.

In sorrow of heart the rivermen row;
And sorrowing folk on the highways go.
The wife's set lips shut her grief within,
And the maids drop tears as they sit to spin.
Day's work may not cease through the day,
But, while the hands labour, the heart can pray;
And the prayers of labouring heart and hand
Go up to Christ from a troubled land;
For here in her chamber doth Frideswide lie,
In anguish and fear, at the point to die.

All through the hours in her pain she lies,
Hearkening silent, with watchful eyes.

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

She hears the patter of children's feet—
She hears their voices and laughter sweet;
And the chanting at matins and evensong;
And the noise of men's labour the whole day
long.

And ever her soul—unresting, aware,—
Follows her household work and prayer;
Blesses us all, asleep or awake,
Each breath we draw, each step we take,
Yearning towards us with yearning sore,
As those, whom soon she will see no more.

Ah, dear Lord Christ!—for the pain so great!
But the grief of her soul is darker yet.
Ah, Christ! wilt Thou pour her this bitter cup,—
And yet never aid her to drink it up?
For her heavenly peace is broken—is gone!
The Lord of her life hath left her alone;
And, out of her anguished silence deep,
She moans to us, who around her weep:

“Ah, pray for me! Pray for the Lord's dear
grace!

I have lost Him—lost Him! He hides His face.”

And we, in our moving to and fro
'Mid the work of our day, we entreat Him low;
And at sunrise, and noon, and when evening falls,
We chant our sad intercessionals.

THE LEGEND OF

The NUNS chant.

By her hands Thou hast fed us;
By her thought Thou hast led us;
By her voice, warned and blest;
By her presence, brought rest.

Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

For Thee her work was done;
In her face Thy love hath shone;
By her didst Thou wondrously
Draw all our hearts to Thee.

Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

Shall Thy love her being spend,
Yet lose her at the end?
Shall she, in mortal pain,
Call to Thee, to Thee, in vain?

Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

And now, as our low chant dies on the ear,
The prayer of her scholars rings full and clear;
As each, from his heart of love and truth,
Pleads with the passionate pity of youth.

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

The SCHOLARS chant.

O Lord our King, most strong and high,
Who rulest the world full gloriously,
Yet hast compassion,—yet dost bend
Man's struggling spirit to befriend.

Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

O Lord, hast Thou not been by her
Of all things good the comforter?
Quelled, through her love, each base desire,
And touched our youth with heavenly fire?

'Mid wars and tumults of the night,
By her, O Lord, Thou broughtest light—
The love of knowledge, bliss of thought
To men, who darkling craved and fought.

O Lord our king, enthroned above,
Behold, behold our grief and love!
Have pity, have pity on her pain,
And turn Thy face to her again!

Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

Oh, sweet is their singing and strong and true,
But yet at the last the sobs break through—

THE LEGEND OF

The young, proud souls, in pain untried,
Are bent as the reeds in a rushing tide.

In the falling dusk, from many a home,
The men of Oxford city come;
By twilit pathways, dreary and long,
Hither the folk from the hamlets throng:
The sick, the outcast and the poor
Gather weeping about the door,
In our church with us, every man out of his need,
As for a mother to mourn and plead.

The FOLK chant.

From street and field and ford,
Cry we to Thee, O Lord!
Our hearts to Thee lift up,—
Taught by her to dare and hope.
Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

Lord, Thou dost bless her so,
At her word sweet waters flow,—
Wellsprings of healing rise
To help our miseries.
Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

O Lord, on her death-bed
Shall she lie uncomforted?
She, who brought us Thy grace,—
Wilt Thou turn from her Thy face?
Ah, Lord Christ! humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

Lord; she hath brought us peace,
Wisdom, courage, heart's ease!
Lord, Lord, requite her no less
In her dread hour of distress!
Ah! Lord Christ, humbly we pray,
Cast Thou not this, Thy child, away!

O Frideswide, vain are our prayers for thee?—
Like winds in a waste, or snow on the sea?
Thy grievous sickness worketh its will;
And the Lord's high grace, it tarrieth still.

As softly about her chamber we move,
She follows us silent, with looks of love;
And when the darkness draws over the west,
And all her house turns to its rest,
She beckons us, with her wasting hand,
Closely about her bed to stand.

“The children?” she whispers.—“They grow
and are strong;
The Lord hath kept them the whole day long.”

THE LEGEND OF

"The thralls?"—"They have eaten and wrought
amain."

"And the two who were sick?"—"They are
well again."

"And the scholars?"—"The dear Lord gives
them light,

And increase of holy learning and might."

"Is all well with the folk?"—"The Lord Christ
they praise

For His blessing and peace upon their ways."

"And yourselves?"—"In His strength hath the
day been spent.

We trust in His love and are content."

"Do ye pray for me?"—"By night and by day,
With all the power of our souls we pray."

"I give thanks—Love—blessing—be with you
all—

The Lord's peace." Faintly the broken words
fall.

Then that one of us all, who in good or ill
To Frideswide's heart was the nearest still,
Asketh full softly and tenderly:

"O Frideswide, our mother, how is it with
thee?"

Heavy the silence a little space,

Then she answers moaning: "He hides His
face."

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

So, day by day, death draweth near,
And darkness is in our hearts, and fear,
To see her, of Christ forgotten, lie
In silence and in agony.
Ever more instantly we pray;
Yet the dark cloud lifts not day by day.
And now at the last our prayer falls dumb,—
For the parting of body and soul is come.
Meekly and slow she whispereth
Out of the folding gloom of death,
Saying: "Saw ye, saw ye the messenger?
I shall pass to-night—when the dawn is near.
He calls me to-night—ere the morning break.
—But they will be weary for my sake,
Digging a grave for me with haste—
They will be weary at the feast.—
Bid them to-night my grave to make,
That they lose not—the Lord's feast—for my
sake.

I go to-night—when the dawn is near.
Saw ye not the white messenger?
—Ah, Lord Christ!—Dost Thou not know?—
Where art Thou?—And whither must I go?"

Black, black is the night, and full of dread,—
Cowering we kneel around her bed;
The flickering lamp burns small and dim;
Full piteously doth she moan for Him.

THE LEGEND OF

Dark! Dark!—Hath her anguish not yet sufficed?
Is it vain that we call on the name of Christ?

But hush! oh, hush!—In the death-dimmed
room,

Sudden, a clear call thrills on the gloom?
Beyond our roofs, beyond the night,
A clear, sweet call, far, far in the height.
Again, yet again!—And then—a voice
Crying, “Rejoice, Frideswide, rejoice!”

Her moan is stayed; with deep-drawn breath,
Like one who wakes from a dream of death,
Gazing on high, she waits; and the voice
Crieth once more: “Rejoice, rejoice!”

Then straight, through the vanished roofs,
doth smite

A gladness of celestial light:
High music piped as on angel-reeds,
And fragrances blowing from heavenly meads.
And speaketh another voice lovingly:

“Finished is now thine agony.

Come thou with us! Thou art proved and
tried—

Thy Lord doth call thee to His side.”

Steadfastly looks she into that light,
Seeing beyond the reach of sight.
Lo! in her eyes doth the anguish cease!
Lo! in her face, the Lord Christ's peace!

SAINT FRIDESWIDE

"I come," she makes answer, "with longing
I come!

Thou art turned at the last; Thou biddest me
home.

O Cicely, and are ye glad with me?
O Catherine, with thine shall my portion be?
Me at the last His hand hath found;
He calls me—He draws me—beyond, beyond!"

And even as she speaks doth that light divine
Through her earthly vesture break forth and
shine.

In all her body is wrought a change;
And the sound of her speech is sweet and strange.
And they, in that light whose presence is,
Call her again, forth to her bliss.

"O Lord Christ! or ever I go away
One last prayer on earth would I pray.
Grant but to these, who sorrowed with me,
This vision of Thy high saints to see."

So, of her love, doth she yet entreat
For us her children about her feet.

Then our eyes are opened, which erst were
held,

And all the heavenly vision revealed;
And lo! at her bed, on either hand,
Maid Cicely blest and Catherine stand!
How glimmer their falling robes of white!

THE LEGEND OF SAINT FRIDESWIDE

Their eyes—how piercing in love and might!
Their hands—in what greeting glad outspread!
Their brows—with what glory garlanded!
Ah, Lord Christ!—But in Thee they live and
move—

Their love but a shadow of Thy love!
Marvelling speechless we fall and adore;
And that radiance of heaven burns more and
more.

The throbs of our grief and passion are stilled;
With joy and with longing our soul is filled.
Now doth she leave us, leave us! And they,
The saints, shall bear a saint away.
'Tis her hour, and the summons! We veil our
eyes:

Too burning bright are His mysteries!
O light! O fragrance!—O power and grace!
And she passes, crying: "His face, His face!"

Now, for its time, must the grave enthrall
The heart that counselled and loved us all.
We lay her down in her church to rest,
With her white hands folded over her breast,—
Her body stretched in a painless ease,
And, in her face, the Lord Christ's peace.

OTHER POEMS

AMOR DEI, PERPETUA JUVENTUS

GIVE me to be
Thy child, and learn for ever at Thy knee!
Give me to grow
Weak and grey-headed, since Thou will'st it so!
Bid me aside
Lay all the pleasure of my health and pride;
Gladness as well,
Sweet ardours, and bright hope,—I'll not rebel!

Only, I pray,
Keep me beside Thee all the night and day,—
Only, for all
Thou takest, give Thyself—and past recall!
And, when youth's gone,
As men count going, 'twixt us two alone,
Still let me be
Thy little child, left learning at Thy knee!

MORALITIES

LET not thine heart be faint for over-fear
Of that which must be; but let this suffice:
Necessity is with God as sacrifice
So thou accept in loyalty severe.
Keep a brave smile; and let thine eyes be clear
To know the right from wrong, the truth from lies:
Wherefore give not to Love's sole use thine eyes,
But be thy loving spiritual and austere.
With this, love much; holding for most assured,
Love's error lies in kind, not in degree.
Think still to the centre;—thus is love secured,
If thy thought piercing and incessant be.
So all thou hast achieved, and all endured,
Shall God transmute to heavenliness in thee.

ON READING DORA GREENWELL'S POEMS

Now look you, gentle wailer by the Cross,
Wooer of pain, rose-wrapt in agonies—
Methinks, ill-helped by those tear-blinded eyes,
When God designs you gain, you revel in loss!

For this sad watch by the forsaken tree,
Whereon He died—then left it conquering—
These tranced sorrows you passionately sing
To long-past times rightly assigned should be.

The pain without the hope—that was the curse,
The cross without the Christ—there was the woe
Of those old times and children, who did not
 know
God's presence in this travailing universe.

Methinks you merely clasp a tree of wood,
And clutch so hard at iron nails in vain—
While He is gone, and moveth among men
Victorious, albeit dimly understood!

TWO WOMEN

I.

You draw us, by the great look on your face,
Out of this world to one that's far more fair.
Almost could we forget you have your place
Here with us, break our bread, our sunshine
share;—

So vast a breath, as of incoming dawn,
Moves with you—a strange promise from afar.
The glorious sun doth linger still withdrawn—
But you have knowledge of the morning-star!

II.

She is just a woman, broad-shouldered, common-
place;

Of movement scarcely yet prepared for wings,
You think—a small-eyed, square and colourless
face,—

A tongue that drips slow speech on trivial things.
You cannot near her, she so walls herself
About with words and nothings; only gleams
Break sometimes from her looks, like gold in
pelf,—

In clay, the possibility of dreams!



THE CANDLE

THEE may a child's hand kindle—thee
His laugh extinguish, tiny spark,
Scarce seen a furlong off.—To me,
The difference between light and dark !

A FEBRUARY DAY

THIS was a day like a gem—not a pearl
Of a soft serene dimness, hiddenly fair ;
But a bold jewel, flashing colour and flame
From all its facets, as down it came,
Sped by God's hand, and, glittering rare,
Reached us, passed us, and dropped in the whirl

THE TIDE

THE tide comes up in the windy bay,
And covers the pools and the sand;—
And who should guess, by the water's play,
Of the sand and the mud, so bare and grey,
That border the wide green land?

In the mind of a man comes up the tide,
The tide of thought at the flow!
The face of that sea is a moving pride;
But what of the will it doth hide?
Is it shallow below?

The tide goes out in the windy bay—
Wide-rippling, out!
The mud and the pools are bare to the day—
See now the shallows, tawny and grey,
And the black weeds strewn about!

When the tide of thought comes up at the flow,
Carve thy will deep, O man!
Of a surety the ebb will come;—and lo!
Thou shalt know thyself, and all shall know,
Over what that bright sea ran!

MAGNA EST PATIENTIA

With patience give answer!

WHAT voices insistent
Are these that torment thee?
What hubbub's distraction
On mind and on hearing
Relentlessly beateth?
—With patience give answer!

Doth there rage at thy temples
The wild voice of Hatred?
Whose echoes with terror—
Whose fierce echoes haunt thee,
And rend thee, and break thee?
—With patience give answer!

The little low whisper,
The low hissing whisper
Of Scorn, o'er thy shoulder,
To the very brain pierceth!
Thy proud, dumb heart trembles—
Thy shrinking soul shudders!
—With patience give answer!

MAGNA EST PATIENTIA

The moan of great dolour—
The sobs of sore sorrow—
Complaining, complaining,
With no hope nor rescue,
Entreat of thee pity.
—With patience give answer!

'Mid thy faintness, thy trembling,
Young outcries of vigour
Demand of thee gladness—
Require of thee laughter—
Ah, youth! all unknowing!
—With patience give answer!

Thou shalt love them that hate thee—
Thou shalt bless them that scorn thee!
Thy griefs shalt thou summon
To pause and have pity—
To pause and learn laughter!
—With patience give answer!

Then a voice, yet another,
Shall call thee, shall call thee!
Thou waitest the summons—
And, lo! it is near thee!
For the great voice calls deathwards
—With patience give answer!

THE GULF-STREAM

As, eastward swinging toward the lands of cold,
The gulf-stream goes across the barren sea,
What heats of burning equatorial day
Adown his race of blue, salt waves are rolled!
Deep is the stream and eager, broad and bold;
Yet doth the chill, green ocean underlay,
And right and left confine, his headlong way;
Lest the sun's gift, by wanderings uncontrolled,
Be lost, and those forsaken isles complain.
—So thou, dear Bringer of God's gifts to men—
England!—far onward let thine empire flow!
Break thou the frosts of ignorance and pain!
Yet, lest the precious boon be poured in vain,
God's sternness close around thee and below!

NATURA CONSOLATRIX

By living odours of the fruitful field,
And brightness of young corn, shalt thou be
healed!

The fitful rushing of the winter rain
Shall feed the unborn flowers, and soothe thy
pain!

And sunlight, moving over misty trees
Through far horizon-spaces, give thee peace!

DURA HIEMPS

STILL and wintry is the air;
The garden-beds with frozen snow
Are piléd deep; and now to blow
Not a single flower will dare;—
The brown and sheltering mould below
They wait for days more fair.

My heart in wintry quiet lies,
Oppressed with grievous load of ill.
So heavy is that grief and chill,
There's not one tender thought will rise;
The mind in me, entombed and still,
Waits, like the flowers, for fairer skies.

In the frozen garden-bed
Not idle do the violets sleep;
But little secret movements creep
Through roots and leaflets buried,
Lest, in that hidden darkness deep,
The spring should find them dead.

DURA HIEMPS

So I, who have no thoughts to bring,
Only heart-stirrings underground—
I make a little murmurous sound,
Crooning, because I cannot sing,
That I too may alive be found,
When comes the spring!

THISTLEDOWN

As musingly, with idle pace,
I roamed the dusty, sea-washed town,
The salt wind tossed against my face
A thistle's silver globe of down.

Did sea-ward gales, with quickening force,
Loose thee, and drive across the main?
Then, swift in their returning course,
Whirl thee, light wanderer, home again?

Or did yon scarce invisible land
First see thee try thy reckless dance?
And doth thy warlike mother stand
To sentinel some field of France?

Nought hath been made, by land or sea,
More fragile, more exceeding fair!
A wondering child might fancy thee
Some half-embodied sprite of air—

So lustrous flash thy spearlets white
Their tiny radiance in the sun—
So softly, in a ball of light,
Adown the wind-drifts ride and run—

THISTLEDOWN

So spread these faintest plummy vans,
To win more speed, to woo more stress,—
Whose lightness any word of man's
Is all too cumbrous to express!

Now risen upon some mounting gust,
And floated high o'er field and street,—
Now turning idly in the dust
And careless fall of trampling feet,—

Oh, thus abroad so wildly faring!—
So light, so soft!—art thou indeed,
Safely an open secret bearing—
Thy secret of the dusky seed?

For this it was the delving root
Through darksome earth did push and press;
And up the dauntless stem did shoot
Its well-defended comeliness.

For this the breathing leaves did spread;
And flowers, with purple passion rife,
Upgathered in one royal head,
Bestowed, received the dust of life!

So wast thou given to sun and shower;
That e'en from thee,—white, drifting thing,—
With root and stem and leaf and flower,
A thistle of the race might spring!

A SONG OF FAIRY-LOVE

IVY-KNOTS,
Bright with dew,
Where the moon's cold gleam
Is straying!—
Forget-me-nots,
Faint and blue,
Who hark what the stream
Is saying!—
Ivy-knots,
Shine with my tears!
Forget-me-knots,
Whisper my fears!

All alone,
Through the night,
Have I roamed unseen
To find you;
In a zone
Quaint and light,
Tender blue, dark green,
I bind you.

A SONG OF FAIRY-LOVE

Ivy-knots,
Ye will press her!
Forget-me-knots,
Caress her!

O sweet fay,
Glad and fair,
And high as yon star
Above me!—
Far away!—
Can I dare
Hope a being so far
Will love me?
Ivy-knots,
Plead for me meetly!
Forget-me-nots,
Whisper her sweetly!

Slow I wreathe;
Yet 'tis done!
'Neath her pine, all in fear,
I lay it!
What I breathe
O'er the zone,
Will ye dare in her ear
To say it?

A SONG OF FAIRY-LOVE

Ivy-knots,
Music is roaming!
Forget-me-nots,—
Ah, she is coming!

MOORLAND HILLS

THIS is the first great air that is made
By the winnowings
Of the Earth-angels' pinions, broad outspread;—
And kindly things,
Drops of music, and drops of light,
And fragrances, and hints of powers
And senses, that are not yet ours,
Fall softly on the hills all night
From the great arching wings!

And see you not, on the hill-tops, why
Children and men
Grow wild and feel more close to the sky?—
And hardly again
Desire the old things, the old joy or glow;—
But the cold, keen life is dearer far.
They can tell that the Earth's but the dust of a
star;
And that none knows whither his feet may go,
When he winds him loose from her chain!

A STAR-SONG

If we could only sing it again,
What hath many times been said and sung,
Oh! sure, there were peace for our pain,
And a righting of our wrong!

'Tis all how the night is dark yet clear,
With a strong slow life, that moves and moves;
And the bold, bright stars they pace through air,
Each in his order, as it behoves.

And we—we live here, down on the ground,
Our short, blind lives, forgetful and small—
Spinning, spinning, around and around,
With tiny clamours, that deafen us all.

But the night, the night doth take no care,
Being to silence separate;
And the stars for ever are
Distant, shining and great.

Ah! it were perfect comfort sure,
If perfectly this we might sing and say—
Not as it hath been sung before,
But in some new way.

PARNASSIA PALUSTRIS

O FLOWER, white handmaid of the Muses high!
Who deckest with fragile charm their rugged
throne

On great Parnassus—thou, whose tranquil eye
Is that of worship glad to be alone!—

Have they so graced with thee this northern
land?—

Less stern perchance than is thy native glen;
For here with living green the rocks are bland—
The gloom and grief are in the hearts of men.

Oh, glad at heart we greet thee, gentlest flower—
Grass of Parnassus!—that didst ere impart
New being to the sunlight, or the power
Of fairer thought to child's and poet's heart!

But, as our hands would pluck thee, up the vale
Swift blasts of chill and sudden storm are driven!
Above the moss thy shuddering stars are pale,
And ashen clouds obscure the sunny heaven.

So ever do the holy Muses give
Even their most gentle gifts of purest grace—

PARNASSIA PALUSTRIS

Even thee, oh tenderest of all flowers that live!
—He who would win their love, their wrath must
face—

Must bear of wandering winds the angry cold—
Must see the storm-cloud's threatening mass un-
furled—

Must catch with listening heart, not overbold,
The echoes of the terror of the world!

LONELINESS

Thy bondman, O dark goddess! thine
Hath he been ever! All his growth
Towards thee thou drewest; and line by line
Didst stamp thine image on his youth,—
For ever now a soul apart,
Thy superscription in his heart!

Sweet first thy sway over the child;
Sweet secrets didst thou whisper low,
In half-awakened ears; and wild
Thoughts in the quick brain set aglow.
Dear was each dim, untrodden place,
Where he might learn to spell thy face.

But, as the days brought manhood, thou
Didst deeper wonders and less fair,
A darker and more threatening brow,
Unto thy votary lay bare;
Whose shuddering courage must repine
To feel his hands fast-locked in thine.

Then longing grew to break that bar
Invisible, which none have broke,

LONELINESS

And wander where his fellows are,
Nor any more confess thy yoke.
—Alas, alas! No comrades bless
The soul accursed to Loneliness!

But thou didst yet—O cruel Might!—
A barrier far more dread devise—
The wrath of men, their scorn and spite,
Mockery and hate in rageful eyes!
How shall he burst through these to win
Heart's rest and home among his kin?

Him didst thou in his childhood choose—
Thy bounden nursling, scholar, slave!
What others bring must he refuse;
What thou dost give him shall he have.
Thy hands his daily food must dress,
O bitter, barren Loneliness!

MENTEM MORTALIA TANGUNT

I.

THE vintage glows beneath the sun ;
And in and out the tangled poles
Brown children singing lightly run.

Through festal hours the daylight rolls
Its rapid splendour westwards down ;
And recks not of the woes,
Far-spread, that lurk in dell and town,
Where men fight hard against their foes,
Hunger and Sin and Pestilence.

The daylight drops all discords out—
Only adjusts its innocence
To the innocent brown children's shout,—
To harmless loves of woodland lives,
To loves of blossoming grass and tree—
Sweet speech, by which the whole world strives
To get its inner meaning free,
In pauseless glad endeavour ;—
Wherein the wailing song
Of human grief and human fever,
Of questioning, complaint and wrong
Is even as if it never were—
Is all as if it had not been !

MENTEM MORTALIA TANGUNT

II.

The broad light knows us not!—nor know
The central, happy depths of sea
Our human heart, our human woe.

Lone of our lot are we!
For, in these slow frail bodies penned,
That suffer, agonize and die,
Is the beginning and the end
Of our historic tragedy,
So heartrending and vast!

What though we count it dims the years,
And doth o'er earth a shadow cast;
Yet all this passion—all these tears—
This tragedy of wrath and gloom,
Played out through aeons of long pain—
Can boast in truth no grander room
Than man's unblest and darkling brain!

A river-reed might gird around
Our scene of storm, wherein the rage
Can never burst its narrow bound—
Can never reach life's central stage—
Is even as if it never were—
Is all as if it had not been!

III.

Brown children! as the shadows creep,
Your quick eyes and your glancing limbs

MENTEM MORTALIA TANGUNT

Are weighed upon by softest sleep—
More tender than the haze, which dims
The glory of your garden-flowers.

Go home, sweet children, to your rest!—
Until once more the daylight hours
Begin their progress to the west.

Sleep sound!—for 'neath your pillowed hair—
Your bright hair, and your nestling heads,
The last of the world's wide joy you bear—
The last free joy that sheds
Its universal life through us;
Till you shall be as all we are—
Mourning, striving, suffering thus—
Alone, from the day's heart sundered far—
Who are as if we never were,
And all as if we had not been!

PEGASUS SIGNIFIETH THE VAIN DREAMS OF A YOUNG MAN

HA, Pegasus! thou frail and arrogant steed,—
Here be thy fair wings broken! Now behoves
The struggle afoot through black and prickly
groves,

Shall make celestial flanks rich ichor bleed!
Now numerous arméd shoots above thy head
Shall triumph; and, grappled to thy dainty
hooves,

These tugging hooks show how the bramble loves
Runner's flesh, and th' entanglement of speed.
Ha, Pegasus!—But a valiant horse thou wert
With oarage of thy wings the winds to stem,
Which dropt from afar at the mere wonder of
them;—

Or else the enamoured embrace o' the clouds to
part!

Ah, Pegasus!—How hath now thy valiance won
That thou with thy fool rider be thus undone?

THE WITCH

A WITCH, blue-eyed, with ragged hair,
Sat by the wide, salt sea.
The lowest sands were pale and bare;
And all alone was she;—
The angry wind was in her hair,
That lifted up the sea.
Her voice was sweet—was wondrous sweet;
And she sang soft and low;
As 'twere the dead things at her feet,
That she was singing to—
To wake them to new life, as sweet
As in the sea-caves low.
And nothing stirred to hear her song,
In earth or sea or air;
The white gulls screeched the shore along,
As if she were not there—
And yet the sweetness of her song
Was pleading in the air.
She muttered: "Once to hear me sing
Earth, air, sea, all was stirred!
All drew to me—foot, sail and wing—
If but my speech they heard;
Long time now do I sit and sing,

THE WITCH

And nothing yet is stirred.
What matter?—So he do but hear,
And come to me again!
He came once; but, in scorn and fear,
I drove him from me then.
But now I pray him that he hear,
And come to me again!"
And still her hungry eyes and dim
Roved all day o'er the sea,—
If they perchance might light on him;
And wondrous sweet sang she;
And her song grew like the twilight dim,
That settled on the sea.
As on a blind man in his night
One cometh unawares,—
Drawn slowly, folded from her sight,
Up from his deep sea-lairs,
Death, while she called him through the night,
Came on her unawares.

EARTHEN POTS

STOOD then and fronted me that cunning seer,
With swiftest, grey-eyed wisdom lightening out
From under piléd brows; and answering spoke:
“Behold, thy life is what thou lookest on!
But come now, follow me!” And I followed
him.

So shortly came unto a vasty cave;
Where said he: “Get thee on thy belly; and
creep

Within and all about! creep back and forth!
And tell me what things thou shalt find therein!

As he commands, I do, in wonderment.
And find that great cave full of earthen jars,
Set all together in a disarray;
High to a man’s knee; botched; of ill device—
And in the interspaces, over the ground,
Damp fungus-growths outspread; and wormy
coils,
Of stench unwholesome, clammy of touch and
cold.

These having found back to my master went,
And told him fully; whereon his smile grew
great.

EARTHEN POTS

“Come now, and walk erect with me, and see!”
Then went I upright with him; and behold!
A most fair, intricate order in the pots;
And each pot heaped with lustre of precious
stones:
Topaz and pearls, sapphires and amethysts,
Wine-hearted rubies and great emeralds—
Bride-jewels for a bride of heaven! I gazed
Marvelling and in high pleasure;—at my ear
“How sayest thou?” cried master, and he
laughed:—
“Behold thy life is what thou lookest on!”

HOME FROM BATTLE

HERE at the good king's tent stand I—
All the night is in the sky.
To-morrow, I trow, in battle I die.

There as I wait—stark, cold and dumb—
Shall Brian, and Denis, and Roland come;
And find me, and lift me, and carry me home.

Three days will the journey be
These dear comrades must carry me—
I shall be home at the end of the three.

At sundown, marching the first long day,
Shall they desire to make their stay
In a strong house beside the way;

But the lord of that house shall ask and know,
I, the dead man, am his mortal foe—
And he shall drive us from him so.

And the second day, by moonlight clear,
To a castle once more shall we draw near;
And men will ask: "Whom have ye here?"

HOME FROM BATTLE

There she, who is queen of all the land—
My lady will by me stand;—
Will lift above me her tender hand!

When, with sad voice, they answer make,
Pale for pity will be her cheek;—
But she will not know whose name they speak.

Then with the dawn we forth shall fare;
And when the high stars shining are,
Me through my fathers' gates shall they bear.

By the pitside shall crouch my hound
As they lay me in the ground—
There I think to sleep full sound!

FRANZ HERMANN MÜLLER

DIED OF THE PLAGUE AT VIENNA, OCT., 1898.

WHILE in the heavens the starry millions yet—
Orion belted, drawing in his train
The Pleiades and those immortal twain—
Immortal after dolour, being set
At last amid the constellations fair
Ensphered in blue celestial air—
Ah! while these yet on high,
Singing in choirs of light, do each to each reply,
Call ye the slumbering nations to awake,
And watch a little hour ere dawn for his dear
sake!

Lo! where, through all her dusky miles
Of forest, and the gabled piles
Of her famed cities, haunts of ancient years,
Great Austria watches, steeped in tears,
The burial-pomp of her heroic son!
And England's heart is still with awful praise;
And France her angry tumult stays,
To marvel at the deed that he has done.

FRANZ HERMANN MÜLLER

Ye souls of warring nations, pause awhile!
For he lies in his darkly-saturate shroud—
For, conquering and conquered, he lies low,
Whose hands have clutched a deadlier foe—
Whose brain has kindled to a greater war,
Than battles on Egyptian sands afar,
Or danger, where the cataract's voice is loud,
By distant upper waters of the Nile.

Tell us, O mourning Mother, why he died!
O Austria, sorrowing bereft,—
O Austria, in thy sorrow proud,—
Unto the awestruck nations speak aloud!
Utter the bitter anguish, and the pride,
And tell us why the upper air he left?

“Ye cities of the plague, accurst, accurst!
Mourn him,—ye ravaged cities desolate!
Mourn him, ye daughters of the East!
Ye mothers of dead sons, in your despair,
Call on him! beat the breast, and rend the
hair!
Ye bridegrooms, fallen at the marriage-feast!—
Ye elders, lying stricken in the gate!

“For he did hear your secular cry
Beating against the portals of the West;

FRANZ HERMANN MÜLLER

And on his joyous heart was laid the quest,
And clear, divine behest,
That he, through dauntless toil, the cause should
try,
Wherefore your doomed and piteous thousands
die.

“Of old there came, forth from the outraged
East,
The Spectre of the Plague,—the Vengeance due!
Floating about the imperial Roman’s head,
As homewards his victorious march he drew,
How did he pass, from breath to poisoned breath,
Insidious, and dealing ghastly death!—
From city unto city how increased!—
Till o’er the West in dark corruption laid,
O’er all the West, that anguish spread,—
That foul invading presence flew!

“Lo! this was he did lift his monstrous head!
Even he—the direst foe of lost mankind!
Whom we, with strife and fury blind,
Marked not, approaching by his deathly way!
—Nay, but he saw—our champion who is dead!
He saw, and leapt to face him in his path;
Drew down upon himself that eyeless wrath—
Into his body all the venom’d pain—

FRANZ HERMANN MÜLLER

Into his brain,
The pitiless death!"

Ceased then that voice of mourning for a space;
And, in the stainless heavens afar,
'Gan pale each vigilant star,
Before the coming of his face,
By whom earth's breathing millions live and die.

Unto that chanted woe none made reply;
But, in a silence humble and divine,
The sister-nations by the grave did wait,
Where earth unto the earth men now consign.

Lone is the spot. The winds of dawn blow
keen;
And Terror, camped about his resting-place,
Forbids the fond approach. Yet not, I ween,
Unhonoured is his solitary state.
Laurel and palm do that dread couch adorn,
Where, grappled with his conqueror, he shall lie,
Resting at length from agony,
Through many a night, and many a growing morn.

Now on thy grave is heaped the sod;
Thy soul of courage flies to God.
Peace, peace is to the tortured breast;
And to the unwearying brain is rest.
By confessor immortal shriven,
God speed thee on thy way to heaven!

FRANZ HERMANN MÜLLER

Anon begins again
Of Austria's sacred grief the solemn strain.
The mighty voice of her complaint
Majestical against the dawn is driven;
And, on the winds of heaven,
From continent to listening continent,
The proud and slowly-uttered chant is sent.

“Alas! Alas! my son!—
For nobler offspring never mother mourned!
No greater shade hath to the shades returned!
No warrior better race of glory run!
How shall our longing leave so dear a grave?
Or how thy kindling presence cease to crave?
Alas! Alas! my son!

“Alas! Alas! my son!
See, where the unruly crew insatiate
For evermore beset
Mine open gates, with clamorous outcries rude,
And loud unseemly roar of lust and greed!
For one, with gory hands imbrued
In brother's blood, doth ask the laurel for his
meed;
And one doth shriek for gold;
And one for wine and women day and night.
Their faces live for ever in my sight,—
Deep-branded in my flesh their names I hold,—

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These and their lives, these and their works I
know!

But thee—when saw I thee amid that throng,
Or heard thy voice their cries among?

Lo, thee I marked not—I who mourn thee now—

Lo, thee I marked not, nor no guerdon gave;—

But thou didst pass me in the murderous din
Unknown and questionless, for thou—

Alas! Alas! my son!—for thou

Didst ask but what thy own right hand could
win—

Didst ask but knowledge, and the skill to save!”

But lo! the dawn is burning into day,

And the wide Orient doth the sun confess.

Perforce must cease the plaintive funeral lay

And roving, tireless thoughts of men go forth

Incessant over all the beaten earth.

Turn we to warfare, and to toil no less,

Travelling undaunted on the destined way.